

66-3196

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT : Retirement Ceremonies

1. Several weeks ago you asked me to give some thought to a suggestion that the Agency have some kind of formal ceremony for retiring employees in order to give proper recognition to this important milestone in their lives and also to impress upon them our appreciation for their contributions and our interest in their activities after they leave us. In considering this, I have reviewed present practices through the Agency for honoring retiring employees, and I have sought the views of the Director of Personnel and a number of representatives from other components.

2. Under our present system, DD/P does have a formal ceremony for each retiring employee. The ceremony is held in the office of the DD/P or the responsible Area Division or Staff Chief, depending on the individual being honored, and is attended by a small group of senior officials appropriate to the occasion. It consists of presenting the employee with his retirement certificate and other mementos, reading the Director's letter to him, and suitable remarks from those present. This system is monitored by the Clandestine Services Personnel Division to assure that an appropriate ceremony is arranged for every retiree, except the infrequent one who is simply not available for this purpose.

3. In contrast, the other Directorates and the DCI's staff follow a less formal approach to retirement ceremonies. Characteristically, their retiring employees are honored at special luncheons or evening functions outside the building, or at special affairs in the building, arranged by their immediate Office or Career Service and attended by the employee's family and sizeable numbers of his CIA friends and work associates. At each affair an appropriate ceremony is held for the presentation of awards and gifts to the retiree and for brief remarks from those in charge. While this system is not as tightly monitored as that of the DD/P, I am assured that no employee is overlooked and that a suitable affair is arranged in every case unless the employee prefers it otherwise. In the latter instance, a small ceremony is held in the office of the responsible Career Service Head or a senior subordinate to present the retirement certificate and the Director's letter and to evidence appreciation for the individual's service to the Agency.

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4. In both situations there is a strong desire, apparently, to preserve our present methods for honoring retirees. DD/P has considered including social affairs as a part of its system and on selected occasions has done so. However, it feels that formal ceremonies best serve its needs. In addition to satisfying cover and security considerations, such ceremonies assure equitable treatment for all employees--especially those returning from long service overseas who have few close ties at headquarters. Other Directorates are equally convinced that their present practices are best. They believe that the spontaneity and fellowship implicit in retirement parties add a highly desirable touch to such occasions and are quite meaningful to the retirees being honored.

5. In time, both these methods will necessarily be influenced by the increasing numbers of employees who will be retiring. Ceremonies and parties for individual retirees will very probably give way to group affairs--a trend already in evidence. Whatever the method, however, the important point, it seems to me, is to assure that every employee is included and receives appropriate recognition. I believe our present system now provides this and I therefore favor its continuation, with the understanding that the Director of Personnel and others will remain on top of the situation to see that no individual is lost sight of as he or she approaches this most significant point in his or her Agency service.

OK/OKW

R. L. Bannerman
Deputy Director
for Support

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